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from the
Daughters
of the
**American
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To all who love the Flag



AN appeal to all Americans who love the Flag, is an appeal to all the earnest, loyal and patriotic of our country-men and country-women. However we may differ in political views, or on questions of public welfare, there is no division, nothing but a solidly united body of Americans in support of our Nation and its emblem.

These loyal Americans have read with anxious hearts, through the months just gone by, the accounts of the valor of our troops following the red, white and blue banner through incredible difficulties and dangers, and through deadly hail of shot and shell. They may even have grown familiar with the story of the brave boys' song of The Star Spangled Banner as they stood under fire and saw it appear triumphant in the struggle beyond; or with the tales of heroic onward rush of the flag bearer, into the very heart of death. And yet—these loyal Americans who can not hear the well-known story but with fast beating hearts, turn to their accustomed daily scenes and look on this emblem of all our sacrifice and bloodshed, the banner which men grasp as a holy thing and safeguard unto death, which may not touch the earth but to enwrap the lifeless bodies of its defenders—they look on undisturbed while these stars and stripes are subjected to every possible indignity. They pass unheeding and without rebuke the most dishonoring, ignoble treatment of the colors.

A holy
thing to our
heroes.

The plea in justification, that "the flag is able to take care of itself" while patriotic in tone, and probably so in intention, is so illogical a shirking of the matter that few words seem necessary in reply. It is an influence upon the young which is needed, and upon those who in such large numbers come from other lands, with minds wholly unacquainted with the institutions in which they are to share.

A request for protection of the Flag is not for protection from those who hold it sacred, any more than laws are made to protect helpless children from *loving* parents, or dependent wives from *tender* husbands. Laws are made to control the reckless, the evil-minded and the vicious. The emblem of the Nation and the Government should be preserved from disrespectful and dishonorable treatment in this country as in others; and from earliest times the great nations have had laws which prevent the desecration of their flags.

Protection
from the
vicious and
disloyal.

The following instances of abuse have been gathered without search or effort, and do not refer to the thousands of cases of misuse in advertising, etc., which are a daily disgrace and distress to lovers of the Flag. They do not include its use as a handkerchief, for the lining of boots and shoes, to make up into all sorts of garments, or as a vehicle of advertisement for intoxicating liquors and patent nostrums. Such a list is far too wearisome and lengthy to recount.

A flag shot.

A stranger in Council Bluffs, Iowa, rode up to a large American flag, bearing a partisan banner, and fired upon it with a shotgun. A soldier shot at the mounted assailant of the flag, wounding the man, who escaped.

In the rooms of the Madison Circuit and District Court of Anderson, Indiana, paper flags bearing pictures of political candidates were torn down and trampled upon.

Burned.

At Sedalia, Missouri, a child on the platform of a train was singing campaign songs and holding a flag. The flag was seized by a man in the crowd of the opposing party and thrown upon a bonfire, and its destruction applauded by his companions.

A large American flag, bearing a banner with a partisan motto, the property of a citizen, was suspended across the principal street of Hammond, Indiana, from a private residence. After having been repeatedly threatened, the flag was torn down in the early morning and trampled into the mud.

A flag rotten-egged.

Clubs of opposing political parties met at the railway station at Janesville, Wisconsin with the result that a National flag was rotten-egged and torn.

At Waukesha, Wisconsin, a large silk flag, bearing no emblem whatever, flying from a flag staff upon a street corner, the property of a political club, was pulled down, torn to shreds and the fragments trampled into the mud.

The recipient of mud and tobacco juice.

In Chicago a large number of the flags bearing pictures of candidates, were spread over the floor of the headquarters of an opposing political party and ostentatiously used for wiping muddy boots, and for the reception of tobacco juice. One of the offenders claimed that the use of the flags for the candidates' portraits, justified their actions. No legal steps being possible to stop the outrage, the threats of the other tenants of the large office building finally brought the outrageous conduct to an end.

Three years ago, on the fourth of July, while a patriotic procession was marching under the national emblem in the streets of Boston, it was violently assaulted by a vicious mob, who hissed the flag, and in the excitement of the riot it was torn by partisan hands.

In June last, a saloonkeeper in Ninety-Second street, Chicago, displayed the American flag with a tobacco advertisement across it. A passer-by noticed this, and remonstrated with the dram-seller, declaring it was a disgrace to disfigure the Stars and Stripes with an advertisement. A wordy conflict arose, blows were exchanged, arrests followed, and Judge Ewing declared the remonstrant guilty of assault, sending the flag defender to jail for ten days.

Jeered at and stoned.

At a flag raising by a party of American laborers, at Scalp Level, Pennsylvania, a group of twenty-five men, including Hungarians, Italians and Poles, jeered the flag and hurled a volley of missiles at it as it was raised. A riot was the result.

In Topeka, Kansas, a railroad employee, in a public harangue, denounced the American flag as a "dirty rag." Representatives of the local Grand Army Posts endeavored, without success, to secure his dismissal from the company's service.

Dragged through the street.

A procession passed unmolested through the streets of Lafayette, Illinois, bearing the red flag at the front and trailing the American flag after it through the filth of the streets.

Heated and unreasoning partisanship and fierce political excitement, can hardly be assigned as the excuse or occasion for maliciously tearing the American flag to bits at a small street meeting in Chicago, on the evening of September 15th, 1897.

Many similar occurrences are known to have taken place in other States than those named. The evil is widespread, not local, and the feeling is generally apparent that the Flag can be treated with disrespect, intentionally, and without fear of punishment.

It is unpleasant to think that Americans abroad are more sensitive to disrespect shown our Flag, or more united in defending it from desecration, but the incident in London last summer implies such conditions. When London shopkeepers used the American Flag for advertisement, hoping thereby to win American trade, they were visited by a committee from the American Society with a request to withdraw the advertisements. With one exception they acquiesced. Let us hope Englishmen are ignorant of the license and immunity which prevails in America.

**American
Flag
protected in
London.**

The impersonal nature of the benefit of such a law calls upon the disinterested and public spirited to exert themselves in its behalf. The effort is indeed not a new one, it has a history of several years—the patriotic workers not being wholly disheartened by having their bills repeatedly consigned to the tomb, in the Judiciary Committee rooms of the Senate and House of Representatives.

In the strong desire for legal prevention of this evil, some of the State Legislatures have been appealed to and have even attempted to protect the emblem of the Nation, which the Nation itself permits to be dishonored in the market place and highways. A pitiable spectacle this of a great country, leaving its National banner and emblem, like an object of charity, to the chance protection of the States. Such continued indifference and unconcern upon this subject, on the part of the Nation's law-makers is unaccountable, for no valid reason has yet been given for refusing such a law. The officers of State courts are elected by the people through partisan politics, and in times of intense political excitement party politics are too heated and affect all questions too seriously to allow elective officers in State courts to have the freedom, impartiality and vigor necessary to the enforcement of such a law.

**Why is
the National
Flag an
object of
charity?**

With the extending boundaries and control of our government, how important it becomes that wherever it floats, the Flag of this country should *always* be held sacred and inviolate.

**What
example do
we give our
new com-
patriots?**

In the first session of the 55th Congress a "Bill to prevent desecration of the Flag" was introduced by request of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, a society of about twenty-eight thousand members. Following is a copy of the Bill. This is the ~~only~~ Flag Bill now before Congress which provides punishment for all forms of desecration of the Flag, and we solicit your active exertion in its behalf.

A BILL

TO PREVENT DESECRATION OF THE NATIONAL FLAG.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives
of the United States of America in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. Any person or persons, corporation or company who shall use the National Flag or the Coat-of-Arms of the United States, or any pattern, imitation or representation thereof, either by printing thereon, or painting thereon, or attaching thereto any advertisement or device, for the purpose of gain or profit, or as a trademark or label, or who shall imitate or represent the National Flag or the Coat-of-Arms of the United States, for an advertisement, trademark or label, upon any goods, wares or merchandise, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

SECTION 2. No device, nor inscription, nor the representation or image of any person or thing shall be imprinted upon, painted upon, or attached to the National Flag, or upon or to the Coat-of-Arms of the United States, except that the devices now attached and used by the Grand Army of the Republic may continue to be used by them.

SECTION 3. Any person or persons who shall tear down, trample upon, or treat with indignity, or wantonly destroy the National Flag or Coat-of-Arms of the United States, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

SECTION 4. Any person, corporation or company violating any provisions of this act, shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine not exceeding——dollars, or by imprisonment not exceeding——years.

Public Opinion

The following excerpts concerning a Flag Law are selected from notices of the press and from letters of prominent citizens:

“We evidently need laws forbidding its (the flag’s) misuse on a much wider scale. The Stars and Stripes should be treated reverently, as civilized men are accustomed to treat the emblems of sacred things. What would be said at the sight of Christian symbols desecrated to advertise whiskey, draw ribald crowds and fill tradesmen’s tills? Love of country is only less a duty than love of God, and no man can love his country who does not respect it and the banner which speaks of it.”—*New York Tribune*.

“Foreign nations protect their national colors, and the United States should not be less jealous than they to save our national emblems from being cheapened or degraded. The approval of this patriotic movement to secure a flag law is almost as general as was the recent approval of the appropriation of fifty million dollars for any emergencies that might confront the country. Let congress give us a flag law.”—*Daily Transcript, Boston, Mass.*

As popular as the war appropriation bill.

“It is a pity that there is no Federal statute forbidding this (advertisement with the flag), and it is not strange that the patriotic Sons and Daughters have tried to effect a reform through the State legislatures. It is a service that congress can best perform.”—*Boston Journal*.

“It really matters little what a careless Briton does with our flag, but it matters much how we permit our own children to regard it, and if they are to be allowed in their own house to see that flag turned to base uses by the greed of Americans of low ideals, it is hardly to be expected that they will grow up with much reverence for it or for what it signifies.”—*New York Tribune*.

Evil influence upon the young.

“Then let us away with everything but the flag, that we may have it solely as a flag, not as an article to attract increased trade. * * * * *

Let the flag be worn, not as a piece of clothing for use, but as a flag, our national emblem. Let the red, white and blue be worn as one wishes, in any combination, but not the flag.” * * * * *

“It is full time that congress took proper cognizance of this growing abuse, an abuse that would not be tolerated by any nation in Europe. We fail to see how this patriotic flag movement can be ignored or thrust aside at Washington. It has our ardent support and must command it until the desired end is accomplished.”—*Daily Mail and Express, New York*.

“The sentiment against the use of the flag for advertising or campaign purposes is undoubtedly widespread and wholesome.”—*Albany Argus*..

“An insult to the whole nation (advertising with the flag) and ought to be stopped once.”—*The Critic, New York*.

“That this splendid ensign of the National glory should be made the means of advertising whiskey and beer, soap and candles, handkerchiefs, shirts, collars and socks, not to speak of yellow journalism, is a desecration, if not a crime. Such abuses must be stopped. * * * * *

Isn’t it time that the use of the American flag for degrading purposes should be forbidden by law? We suffer it to be trampled and spat upon and disgraced at home, and thus all respect for it, as the emblem and sign of national power is lost. Let the desecration of the flag be stopped by law.”—*Daily Times-Herald, Chicago*.

Let it be stopped.

“It is the flag of our Union, and not the business banner of any individual. Men are sometimes thoughtless as well as selfish and misuse the national banner, forgetting that it is consecrated to higher aims and purposes than the protection of selfish interests. A national law would not only protect it, but would be a means of inculcating a higher respect for it among those who have hitherto taken unwarranted liberties with it.”—*Daily Journal, Detroit, Mich.*

“The very multitude of the patriotic petitions show that there is a popular sentiment in favor of the proposed ‘flag bill’ legislation.”—*Daily News and Courier, Charleston, South Carolina.*

“If the American people will degrade the national banner, let our national law makers give us a flag law which will wrench the two-edged sword of desecration from the hands which so heedlessly wield it.”—*Christian Advocate.*

“A large proportion of the American people are possessed of a sincere and earnest patriotism, enough to enforce a demand that the most beautiful flag in the world be freed from the contamination of trade and that it continue to wave as a symbol of deeds of glory and not the almighty dollar. The flag bill should become a law; it prevents desecration.”—*Daily Union, Manchester, N. H.*

“The American people have seen their flag degraded and disgraced so long and so persistently, that there is a growing sentiment that the ‘flag bill’ ought to have the support of all members of congress. After this bill has been passed, as we believe it will be passed—and we believe it for the simple reason that it ought—the flag will disappear from all advertising schemes. It will then be restricted to the purposes for which the founder of the republic designated the national colors. The flag is one of the things that ought to be religiously saved from desecration. Let it be the emblem of patriotism and nothing else.”—*Daily Register, Des Moines, Iowa.*

“How can our youth be taught to regard the flag as something sacred, when its degradation is in evidence before their faces daily? It’s only a matter of sentiment that demands flag legislation, but it is the kind of sentiment for which the patriot Warren fell at Bunker Hill. If our legislators, like Senator Hoar and Representative Henderson, think there is no earnest, strong public opinion behind this endeavor to prevent the desecration of the national flag, they will be woefully mistaken. Spanish mobs may spit on our national colors or tear them in fragments—it is no more than the Americans have done at home. It is time now for the real truehearted Americans to make their sentiments known. If we do not publicly respect the national flag ourselves, how can we expect foreigners abroad to do so? Let us have a flag law.”—*Daily Dispatch, St. Paul, Minn.*

Against this sacrilege, a noteworthy protest was uttered by General Grant, during the political campaign of 1868, when, observing the names of Grant and Colfax attached to a national flag, suspended over a business street in Galena, he requested that the flag be taken down or the names removed, saying: “There is no name so great that it should be placed upon the flag of our country.”

“I am always in sympathy with every movement that tends to the honor of the flag, and restrains a misuse of it.”—*Excerpt from a letter from Ex-President Benjamin Harrison.*

“I fully endorse the patriotic work of promoting a high regard for the national colors, and a profound reverence for the flag.”—*From Major General Nelson A. Miles, commanding the American Army.*

“No effort should be spared to impress upon the minds of the youth of our land that the banner is the emblem of the nation’s supremacy and the representation of dignity, authority and power. * * Its misuse should not be tolerated. I hope congress will give us a law to protect the the national flag from desecration.”—*From Horace Porter, United States Ambassador to France.*

“I am entirely in sympathy with the purpose of it.” (The Flag Bill).—*Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge, U. S. Senator.*

Free it
from the
Almighty
Dollar.

General
U. S.
Grant’s
protest.

Ex-President
Harrison.

“The desecration of the national flag has always seemed to me a spectacle that may well subject us to foreign ridicule and self-shame, that while we talk and sing, and declaim so proudly and constantly about the star spangled banner and ‘Old Glory,’ we permit it to be degraded by its misuse as an advertising medium. * * I often wonder what the old soldiers in congress are about to permit it.”—*From Major General Henry Kyd Douglas.*

**A spectacle
for ridicule
and shame.**

“I will do all I can to have the bill passed by congress to protect our flag.”—*Hon. Philetus Sawyer, Ex. U. S. Senator.*

“I have been for a number of years in hearty and active sympathy with this patriotic movement to compel respect for the flag. I shall do all in my power to secure favorable action by the present Congress.”—*From General Horatio C. King.*

“I am in favor of this measure, and if the opportunity comes I will do what I can toward its passage.”—*From Hon. Theodore Roosevelt, Ass't Sec'y Navy..*

**Hon.
Theodore
Roosevelt.**

“The matter has been before the Judiciary Committee at previous sessions, and I have been generally favorable to the bill.”—*Hon. John M. Thurston, U. S. Senator.*

“I am heartily in favor of it. * * I shall do everything I possibly can to obtain action upon your bill.”—*Hon. J. H. Davidson, M. C.*

“I will take great pleasure in doing all in my power to prevent the further desecration of the American flag. * * I hope congress will soon pass the desired measure.”—*Hon. John J. Jenkins, M. C.*

“I have interceded, in behalf of flag legislation, with members of the Judiciary Committee until I think I have exhausted their patience. * * and as to those (candidates for congressional nominations) who refuse to commit themselves to support and vote for some one of our flag bills every patriotic citizen ought to feel justified in opposing their nomination.”—*Hon. Michael Griffin, M. C.*

“The provisions of the bill meet my hearty concurrence and I shall be much pleased to do all I can to secure its passage.”—*Hon. S. S. Barney, M. C.*

“It will give me pleasure to do anything that I can to aid in the passage of a measure of this kind, and when it comes up I shall give it my hearty support.”—*Hon. J. W. Babcock, M. C.*

“I will cheerfully do anything I can to further the object so much desired by your society.”—*Hon. Alex. Stewart, M. C.*

“I will do all in my power for the passage of the bill.”—*Hon. Edward Sauerhering, M. C.*

“I assure you of my undivided support of the bill.”—*Hon. E. S. Minor, M. C.*

“I will give the bill my cheerful support, and, should it come up, will be glad to assist its passage. I believe that some regulation in the nature indicated of the bill will be wise and proper.”—*Hon. Theobald Otjen, M. C.*

“I am glad to inform you that the bill will have my cordial support. * * I do not see why any American citizen should oppose the enactment of a law which, will afford “real” protection to the flag and absolutely prevent its desecration. You may rely upon my vote and active influence to secure the passage of your bill.”—*Hon. H. A. Cooper, M. C.*

“The people should see and feel that the Flag is theirs to help protect and cover them wherever they may be, and honor its brave folds before the world.”—*From Lieut. General James Longstreet.*

**From
the South.**

“I am heartily in favor of the general purpose of the bill referred to and shall do everything in my power to assist to bring about such legislation.”—*Hon. Ebenezer J. Hill, M. C.*

“I will be very glad to co-operate with you in your good work * * and I am heartily in favor of the unity of all patriotic societies in the endeavor to have our flag respected and protected as it should be. * * I hope that some favorable action may be had at this session.”—*From General J. C. Breckenridge.*

“I appreciate most heartily the efforts you are putting forth in connection with others. * * Command me, my dear madam, in the furtherance of this most worthy object.”—*Hon. W. D. Hoard, Ex-Governor of Wisconsin.*

“I am heartily in sympathy with the movement. * * I earnestly hope that some legislation on the subject will take place during the present session of Congress.”—*George H. Shields, Attorney, St. Louis, Mo.*

“There is some necessity of legislation on the subject, and I will do all in my power to further the object.”—*James H. Hoyt, Attorney, Cleveland, Ohio.*

“I shall certainly be very glad to do anything in my power to assist in carrying out the work which your committee has in charge. * * The flag of our nation should be sacred to all, and every loyal American should be glad to see a bill passed prohibiting its desecration. I sincerely trust the day is not far distant when such a measure will become the law of the land.”—*Hon. Geo. R. Peck, Attorney, Chicago.*

“I earnestly endorse the bills for the prevention of the desecration of our flag, which the Daughters of the American Revolution have prepared and presented to the United States Congress.”—*From Colonel Frederick D. Grant.*

“I am in full sympathy with such a bill and will do all that lies in my power to effect the passage of a bill which will prevent the desecration of the flag of our country.”—*A. F. Staniford, Brooklyn, N. Y.*

“I am deeply interested in this matter and if any effort on my part can bring about the desired result, you may rest assured it will be accomplished.”—*John Quincy Adams, New York City.*

“I am heartily in favor of the movement to prevent desecration of the flag.—*Hon. John B. Weber, West Seneca, N. Y.*

“I am thoroughly in favor of the principle to establish which the bill is proposed. If in any way I can promote its interests, it will give me pleasure to do so.—*Rev. Charles Edward Cheney, Chicago.*

“I am in full sympathy with your work and hope you will be successful in your efforts (for a Flag Law), and I will do all that I can to assist you.”—*The Late Mrs. John M. Thurston.*

“I do not see how any bill can meet the case more fully than the one you send me, and I am heartily in favor of it. I will also do all that I can for it.”—*Gen. Thomas Wilson, New York City.*

“I am in hearty sympathy with your movement.”—*Dr. John H. Barrows, Oberlin.*

We ask for your assistance in arousing Congress to a realization of the wish of the people for such a law; and to this end we ask you to write urgently in its favor to your Senators or Representatives, and especially to members of Judiciary Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives.

JUDICIARY COMMITTEES.

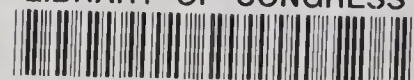
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In behalf of the Committee,
Very respectfully,

FRANCES SAUNDERS KEMPTER
Chairman Flag Committee,
National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

Milwaukee, Wis.

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